'Household Consumer Expenditure' conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) at an interval of approximately five years. The latest such survey was conducted in 1999-2000. As such, Planning Commission does not estimate poverty district-wise. The number of persons living below the poverty line, for the State of Uttar Pradesh in the years 1993-94 (50th Round) and 1999-2000 (55th Round) for rural and urban areas is given below in the table:

Number of persons living below poverty line in Uttar Pradesh

(No. of Poor in Million)

Year	Rural	Urban	Combined
1993-1994	49.6	10.8	60.4
1999-2000	41.2	11.8	53.0

As observed from the above table, the number of persons living below poverty line in Uttar Pradesh has come down from 60.4 million in 1993-94 to 53.0 million in 1999-2000.

As regards district-wise data, it would be relevant to note that the BPL Census 2002 initiated by the Ministry of Rural Development has not been finalized so far.

(c) The Government has adopted a three pronged strategy for reducing poverty in the country. It comprises of (i) accelerated economic growth with a focus on sectors which are employment intensive; (ii) human and social development through provision of basic minimum services; and (iii) targeted anti-poverty programmes. It is not feasible to segregate and specify the district-wise impact of all such programmes on the reduction of poverty.

(d) Yes Sir. The SC/ST population is an important parameter in the allocation of funds for major schemes.

Central Assistance to Madhya Pradesh

452. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government is adopting dual criteria while granting Central assistance to Madhya Pradesh in comparison to other States:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the detailed information in this regard; and

(c) the details of the central assistance given to Madhya Pradesh by the various Ministries during the one and a half year's regime of United Progressive Alliance Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) No, Sir. Allocation of Central assistance for the Annual Plans of the States including Madhya Pradesh is primarily governed by the relevant guidelines/criteria.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The amount of Central Plan assistance released by Central Government to Madhya Pradesh during 2004-05 was Rs. 2674.27 crores. The allocation of Central Plan assistance during 2005-06 for Madhya Pradesh is Rs. 1217.57 crores as grant and Rs. 2121.16 crores as loan. (Such loan is to be mobilized from the market, consequent to the recommendation of the Twelfth Finance Commission). Rs. 137.63 crores grant has been released to Madhya Pradesh by the Central Government so far in 2005-06.

Development of Science & Technology

453. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any initiatives for development and promotion of Science and Technology in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of funds granted for this purpose during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government has taken a number of initiatives for the development of science and technology in the country. During the 10th Five Year Plan the Government has focused on generating relevant innovative technologies; preserving,